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Letter dated 12 May 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government and in view of the baseless allegations and accusations that the mission of the Syrian regime has continuously made against Qatar since the start of the revolution in Syria, I wish to reiterate my country's position that no heed should be paid to that regime's attempts to accuse States that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, are standing with the Syrian people in support of its legitimate demands. Nor should heed be paid to that regime's failed attempts to distract the attention of Member States, in general, and the members of the Security Council, in particular, prior to any event that will focus on the war crimes and crimes against humanity that it continues to commit.

I should also like to reiterate that Qatar is known, both at the regional and international levels, as a committed and active member of the international community. Qatar is also known for its efforts to foster international peace and security, including the efforts of Qatari Government institutions to mediate conflicts and resolve them peacefully, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. All of the accusations that the regime has levelled against Qatar, including those set out in its letter of 4 May 2015, are false, malicious, unfounded and illogical.

Making such accusations is in keeping with the regime's modus operandi, which is based on falsifying facts and disseminating malicious propaganda in order to cover up its systematic policy of terrorizing and oppressing the Syrian people. It is also the regime's policy to employ all means to achieve its goals, including those that are internationally prohibited, such as chemical weapons, even though that might lead to the disintegration of the Syrian Arab Republic and could destabilize the region and the world.

In that connection, we should like to reiterate that the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic established by the Secretary-General in 2013 determined that surface-to-surface rockets armed with sarin gas had been used. In addition, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact-Finding Mission established in 2014 to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria determined with a high degree of confidence that chlorine had been used repeatedly as a weapon in that country.

The attacks against Idlib and its countryside using toxic chemicals continued even after the adoption of Security Council resolution 2209 (2015) of 6 March 2015, which condemns in the strongest terms any use of any toxic chemical as a weapon in Syria. Those attacks are a flagrant violation of the above-mentioned resolution, in which the Council decided that it would impose measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in the event of non-compliance.

The involvement of the Syrian regime in those crimes is now well known. All the evidence documented in the reports of the United Nations points to that. For example, as noted in the reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission, helicopters were flying over the targeted locations at the time the chemical weapon attacks occurred. This confirms the involvement of the regime, because it is the only party in Syria that possesses helicopters.

Given that establishing responsibility for those shocking crimes is not part of the Fact-Finding Mission's mandate, we join those States and international organizations that are calling for the establishment of an international commission of inquiry to identify the persons responsible for those crimes and bring them before an international criminal justice forum.

Those ugly crimes are indicative of an utter disregard for civilian life and are in stark violation of international law and the relevant international instruments. The persons responsible for those crimes must be punished, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), paragraph 6, in which the Council stressed that those individuals responsible for any use of chemicals as weapons, including chlorine or any other toxic chemical, must be held accountable.

The atrocities and blatant violations that have been perpetrated over the course of four years against the Syrian people by a regime that is supposed to be that people's primary protector demonstrates the utter failure of the manner in which the international community has dealt with the officials involved in those crimes. Urgent measures must be taken to save the Syrian people from a regime that is committing atrocities against it and from terrorist groups the operations of which the regime facilitates in order to spread chaos in Syria and the region, and achieve its aims, even if that comes at the expense of international peace and security.

In conclusion, Qatar reiterates its steadfast support for the Syrian people and affirms that it will spare no effort to end their suffering by all legal means and ensure that they are heard by the Security Council and the international community.

I should be grateful if the present could be circulated to the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Permanent Representative